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by Ron Kovacs

Z*NET NEWSWIRE / Z*NET ENGLAND NEWSWIRE

The ST version of what is generally regarded as the standard paint package for the Amiga is now available from Electronic Arts. Deluxe Paint will read all popular ST picture file formats, plus Amiga IFF files, and boasts 999 animation buffers each of which can hold up to 999 frames. Proportional fonts, font editing, color mixing airbrushes, STE extended palette support, and real-time magnification are among st wide array of features available. Deluxe Paint will cost UK\$49.99 until the end of November when the price will rise by UK\$10.00.

CALAMUS PRICE CHANGES

To make room for Calamus SL, the price of the current version will drop to UK\$265.00. Calamus SL, which includes full color separation facilities will retail around UK\$500.00.

AT CONFUSION

Gasteiner has announced that they are the sole UK distributors of AT Speed at UK\$239.99, and that Full Circle Technologies, who had announced they were supplying AT Speed at UK\$269.00, are unable to supply the product. AT Speed offers IBM ST emulation with CGA, Olivetti, Hercules and Tandy 1000 display modes as well as full Atari mouse, RS232 and hard disk support. Atari SLM804 support will follow.

DATALIFE 3-1/2 INCH ED 4 MB MICRODISK

Verbatim introduced the DataLife 3-1/2 inch Extra High Density (ED) 4 MB microdisk this week. DataLife 3-1/2 inch ED 4 MB microdisks can be easily formatted for Macintosh and IBM systems. A number of manufacturers are developing compatible 4 MB disk drives which prompted Verbatim to make 4 MB media available now. DataLife 3-1/2 inch ED 4 MB microdisks are currently being used by several manufacturers in the testing of their disk drives. The disks suggested retail price is \$14.77 each, or \$147.70 per 10 pack box.

IBM ANNOUNCES PS/2 REDUCTIONS

IBM announced a price reduction on one version of its PSystem/2(a) Model 80 by 7 percent. In addition, IBM has withdrawn four models of the PS/2 the PS/2 Model 30-001 and -021 and Model 80-111 and -311. The withdrawals are effective December 27, 1990.

| IBM PERSONAL SYSTEM/2 | FORMER PRICE | NEW PRICE | STANDARD CONFIGURATION |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|--|
| Model 80-121 | \$7,495 | \$6,945 | 20 MHz 80386; 2 MB RAM; 1.44 MB diskette drive; 120 MB fixed disk. |

C++ CREATOR IN SPECIAL GENIE CONFERENCE

The Borland Round Table on GENie will have a special guest November 4, 1990 at 8pm. Bjarne Stroustrup, the originator of the C++ language at AT&T. Mr. Stroustrup is also the author of the book, "The C++ Programming Language". He will be answering questions about the nature and philosophy of C++. To enter the Borland conference area, it's located at page 765;2. The general format of the conference will be a question and answer session, with all submitted questions answered first. If time permits afterwards, there will be an "open microphone" question period. All questions for this conference must be submitted by November 1, 1990 and addressed in email to K.KLOP.

ELECTRONIC ARTS SHIPS

Electronic Arts announced that in the week ending Sept. 23, the company shipped over \$1 million worth of game cartridges for the 16-bit Sega Genesis console.

Z*NET ENGLAND UK NEWSWIRE brought to you Ctsy of Paul Glover of the
ST Club Newsletter of Nottingham England.

Z*NET NEW ZEALAND

by Jon Clarke

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=====Pun of the day==
= Hussa'n I said that? =
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This week we are going to look at some of the top software titles across
the Alantic in the United Kingdom. Current for October 1990.

Top 10 budget games titles.

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Italia | Code Masters |
| 2. Pro tennis Simulator | Code Masters |
| 3. Grim Blood | Mastertronic |
| 4. Targhan | Action 16 |
| 5. SAS Combat | Code Masters |
| 6. Formular 1 Grand Prix | Micro Value |
| 7. Advanced Ski Simulator | Code masters |
| 8. league Challenge | Atlantis |
| 9. Rock Star | Code Masters |
| 10. Fast Lane | Action 16 |

Top 10 PD / Shareware titles.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. ST Writer | Word Processor |
| 2. Sheet spreadsheet | Spreadsheet |
| 3. Spell Checker and word counter | Word Processing |
| 4. FastCopy | Copier Utility |
| 5. Ani ST | Graphics |
| 6. Kid Publisher | Eduction {Dot does it again} |
| 7. Neochrome | Graphics |
| 8. UniTerm | Communications |
| 9. S-Copy3 | Copier Utility |
| 10. Virus killer | Utility |

The top 10 selling full priced games.

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| 1. Kick off | Anco |
| 2. F-19 Stealth Fighter | Microprose |
| 3. F-29 Retaliator | Ocean |

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 4. Imperium | Electronic Arts |
| 5. Italy 1990 | US Gold |
| 6. World Cup Soccer 1990 | Virgin |
| 7. MidWinter | Rainbird |
| 8. Flood | Bulldog |
| 10. Emlyn Hughes International Soccer | |

NB: Budget games are priced under ten pounds Sterling.
Full priced games are priced over five pounds Sterling.
Not all these titles are available in the USA.
PD list from the top UK PD libraries over the last six months.
Other lists sourced from Gallup.

START ONLINE PREMIERES

Compiled by Ron Kovacs Ctsy CompuServe

Recently, Antic Online changed it's name to STart Online on CompuServe. The area previously dedicated to Antic Online reports has been changed and now contains direct reprints from STart magazine. Here is a recent capture of the area.

CompuServe START

- 1 Introduction to START ONLINE
- 2 Feature Stories/Reviews/Atari News
- 3 Software Shelf
- 4 RLE Art Gallery
- 5 Atari Users Group Listings
- 6 The Atari Forums (SIG*ATARI)
- 7 ANTIC/START ONLINE Archives

INTRODUCTION TO START ONLINE

START ONLINE magazine offers exclusive coverage of the Atari computer world, specializing in the ST and 8-Bit computer lines. Our online magazine offers the following features:

- * DOWNLOADABLE SOFTWARE
- * INDUSTRY NEWS
- * ONLINE ART GALLERY
- * ST AND 8-BIT FEATURE ARTICLES
- * NATIONAL USERS GROUP LISTINGS
- ...and much more.

SOFTWARE SHELF

You can download software from START ONLINE! Every month, our Software Shelf will feature programs from previous issues of START Magazine. Download as many as you like: they're all available at normal CompuServe connect charges.

At the end of every month, Software Shelf programs will be moved into the appropriate Atari Forum Libraries, and new programs will appear on the Shelf. (Type GO ATARINET to get to the Atari Forums.)

USERS GROUP LISTINGS

Although the online community is probably your best and most effective link to the Atari world and other Atari computer users, local Users Groups also offer a valuable service in providing support and offering assistance. Our Users Group listings will put you in touch with your local organization.

MORE FEATURES

Look for more current Atari news. We've streamlined many procedures and made many technical improvements which let us offer hot news and timely features very quickly (usually within 24 hours).

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Z*NET CANADA

by Terry Screiber

SHAREWARES

Ever tried to get the latest version of a shareware program? Now where is that address, I'm sorry, we don't take credit cards! A quick trot to the bank or post office to get that U.S. or Canadian money order or maybe not so quick. There are other problems involved as well but I'm sure you know most of them.

Commercial software houses have distributors so why not the small independents? Dammed good idea? I thought so, thus along with our retail store we are opening an area called Sharewares, a one stop clearing house for Atari ST shareware software. Shareware will be taken on consignment and offered for sale through outlets in Vancouver and Seattle via Visa or Mastercard with royalties paid on sales at the end of each month.

We are also planning on advertising in Club newsletters and magazines, this should help those Authors on a small budget to get some exposure. For more information contact me at (604) 278-2099 during business hours.

SERVICE FACILITY EXPANDING

Atari Canada's General Manager Geoff Earle announced today a one hundred thousand dollar expansion to Atari Canada's service area. This includes new equipment and more staff to handle the service and shipping of repaired equipment. "We realize there have been some problems with the service department in the past" said Geoff, "but with this expansion and an inter-departmental network online we hope to become one of the elite that is know for their service as well as their product lines".

Recent marketing studies done by Atari in Canada have found the consumer is not buying on price but after market service. Atari is taking steps at this time to bring their service up to standards which will equal or

surpass most in the consumer market. This will also reflect on dealer orders with a faster turn around on parts and supplies.

ATARI IN BUSINESS

The Pacific Rim Computer and Communications Show is Western Canada's answer to Comdex. This is held in Vancouver every year, this year falling on January 14th to 16th and attracts the who's who of the computer manufacturers. Atari has attended this show before in conjunction with dealers but this year there are a few changes.

Atari is serious about business applications and this show will be the first in a line of a new business campaign. Atari users have long known the positive aspects of the computer and now with the new "Atari TT" they have a more serious contender for this market.

In attendance will be Jimmy Hotz (Hotz Box), Nathan Potechin (ISD Marketing), Geoff Earle (Cdn General Manager), Denise Carrol (Marketing Coordinator), Murray Brown (Western Canada Sales and Marketing Manager) as well as Tim Breck and Paul Garay, two notables in the MIDI field.

The Atari area will be a show within a show featuring demonstrations on Desktop Publishing, Desktop Music, MIDI, Networking, Educational and Research, Word Processing and more. The entire line of products, Stacy, Portfolio, and MS-DOS line as well as the Emulators for display and demonstrations and of course, the 68000 and 68030 line.

LUNACY 3.0

Press Release

> LUNACY 3.0 IS DONE! *

NETWORK 23 ANNOUNCES LUNACY 3.0 FOR ST USERS!

After many months of long, hard work...not to mention a lightning strike or two, LUNACY 3.0 is now available to registered users! New features to 3.0 include:

- * TOS 1.4 compatibility.
- * Start level selection (1-20).
- * Joystick and/or keyboard control.
- * Repeat block sequence...play same game again and again!
- * Save configuration of keyboard layout, sound, and preview selections to be loaded every time.

A playable version of this shareware program will be uploaded to GENie for distribution everywhere, but with some changes...

1. As of the date 3.0 is uploaded to GENie, registration for LUNACY! will change to \$12, up from \$10 for LUANCY! 2.0.
2. Instead of a 20-second delay before each game, the version uploaded will, in essence, be a "demo." Only 75 blocks will be able to be placed before the game ends...I am trying this tactic in an effort to get more registrations (looking at GENie alone, the ratio of downloads to registrations is greater than 40-1 and from the

responses I've been getting about the quality of this game, I feel that registrations are a small price to pay for a quality game).

3. Because this will be a demo game, I am offering the following registration procedure...

- a. Before I upload version 3.0, I will still honor any and all registrations for \$10 as long as they are postmarked the day before LUNACY! 3.0 appears in the GENie libraries. The day V.3.0 is available, the registration cost will be \$12. Anyone registering from now on will receive LUNACY! 3.0 for their registration.
- b. Tentatively, 3.0 will be uploaded within the next two to three weeks.
- c. If you do wish to upload, send \$10 to:
NETWORK 23 SOFTWARE
7 Sarah Avenue
Springfield, IL 62703
and make sure you send your return address.

I hope this new NETWORK 23 policy will not offend too many people. I am just trying different methods to entice people to register shareware. All shareware authors NEED registrations to survive! I realize that the size of 3.0 as a download file and the fact it is only a demo will scare some people away from downloading it. For this, I am sorry, but I also know that many people will put up with a 20-second delay. How about a minute delay? or 5? where does it end?

Hopefully this file will also show people that I am dedicated to working on and improving LUNACY! I believe (or would LIKE to believe) that many people did not register because of the untested "promise" of future upgrades...upgrades that may NEVER materialize while one is stuck with paying \$10 for a one-shot deal. If you are one of those people, now's your chance to register and get an improved LUNACY! Future work will be dedicated to a true 2-player game mode and new, exciting options that are described in the game manual.

If you have any opinions, or want to attack or praise this stand I am taking with a demo version, feel free to write me at R.MARTIN22 (maybe soon to be changed, watch this area) and tell me what you think. I am not trying to make people angry with me...that is not my intent. I would just like to see some return on my hard work.

FASTER THAN LIGHT!

FastCopy III vs DeskTop Formatter 1.1 and Others!

by John Strand

(Reprinted from the Puget Sound Atari News, August 1990)

First I would like to say that I am not an expert on copying or formatting programs but FastCopy and DeskTop formatter really intrigue me so I thought I would compare the two and also some other copying and formatting programs.

FastCopy III is a new freeware copy/format program from Germany by Martin Backschat. DeskTop Formatter 1.1 is a shareware copy/format program from John Harris of California. These copy/format programs are to be use with one or two disk drives; and yes, the programs do make copies very fast!

FastCopy III

FastCopy not only makes copies, it will format disks very fast (fastest I have seen so far). You can format a disk on one or two sides, up to 11 sectors, and up to 86 tracks. The program has many other functions and most are self explanatory, but not all. There is a >HELP< menu to explain the functions, however it's in German! The author offers a manual printed in English that explains every function of the program for 50 Deutsch-Mark (about \$30.00 U.S.). With this purchase you'll also receive the latest version of FastCopy.

FastCopy has ten main buttons located in the middle of the screen that do the following; copy disk, scan disk, format disk, directory, quit, new conf, virus check, soft format, streamer, and help. These functions are straight forward with the exception of the 'streamer' function. This function is supposed to let you read and write to a hard disk partition, but I could never get it to work (maybe this is where English manual would help!).

When clicking on the 'directory' two boxes will appear in the upper right of your screen. One is a standard Atari close-window box with up and down arrows below it so you can move one file at a time through your directory. The other box has an X in it to exit the directory. Below the X box is an Atari slider box which allows you to click on or drag (like the standard Atari window) to check on your files. Below the main buttons are three boxes with more buttons. The lower left box has the following buttons: Verify Destination, Fast Format Destination, Read Disk Configuration, Multiple Copy and Get Sectors. The lower center box contains the Source and Destination buttons (A: to A:, A: to B:, B: to B: or B: to A:) and there are some buttons for 2, 3, 6 and 12 ms which is the step rate ('mit shift' - whatever that is?). The lower right box has buttons for disk configuration that can be set for one or two sided disk, sectors (01 to 11), starting track and ending track (00 to 86).

DeskTop Formatter 1.1

This is another copy/format program that will format a disk on one or two sides, up to 11 sectors, and up to 82 tracks. The shareware cost is \$10.00, but this also includes RamPlus, a ramdisk and printer spooler program plus a mouse doubler, screen saver and a cluster fix program to fix a bug in GEM DOS. The DeskTop Formatter's 'window' looks like that of most other format programs. The top half of the window has buttons for doing the formatting chores which includes one or two sided disks, sectors/track from 01 to 11, and tracks from 80 to 82. The format can be normal or twisted. The lower half of the window is used for copying disks A: to B:, A: to A:, etc. There are Auto or Manual modes for copying. The Auto mode detects how the original disk is formatted and makes the copy the same way. The Manual mode allows you to choose the starting and ending tracks to be copied (this is mainly for use when copying a non-TOS formatted disk). There is also a 'Test' button that will test for errors on the disk. The 'Erase' button quickly erases the directory and FAT sectors of the disk. 'Verify' and 'Format Destination' buttons complete the available options.

Although Desktop Formatter is not as sophisticated as FastCopy, it is still a very good program (and, you get the ramdisk/printer spooler, mouse doubler, screen saver and the cluster fix programs too).

Well, now down to the nitty-gritty. How fast are these programs? The following information tells just how fast these two programs are by comparing them to the standard Atari desktop and other popular copying and formatting programs.

FORMATTING SPEED COMPARISONS

| Formatting Program | Disk Parameters | | | | Time Required (minutes:seconds) | |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------|--------|---------|---------------------------------|--------|
| | Sides | Sectors | Tracks | Bytes | Verify | Off/On |
| Atari desktop | 2 | 9 | 80 | 726,016 | n.a. | / 1:39 |
| FastCopy III | 2 | 9 | 80 | 737,280 | 0:36 | / 1:08 |
| (Extended | 2 | 10 | 82 | 839,680 | 0:53 | / 1:27 |
| Formats) | 2 | 11 | 82 | 924,672 | 1:10 | / 2:17 |
| DeskTop | | | | | | |
| Formatter 1.1 | 2 | 9 | 80 | 728,064 | 1:07 | / 1:40 |
| (Extended | 2 | 10 | 82 | 830,464 | 1:09 | / 1:42 |
| Formats) | 2 | 11 | 82 | 912,384 | 1:09 | / 2:15 |
| Univ. Item | | | | | | |
| Sel. III | 2 | 9 | 80 | 726,016 | n.a. | / 1:32 |
| (Extended | | | | | | |
| format) | 2 | 10 | 82 | 828,416 | n.a. | / 1:43 |
| Formatter 4.0 | 2 | 9 | 80 | 726,016 | 1:09 | / 1:44 |
| (Extended | | | | | | |
| format) | 2 | 10 | 82 | 828,416 | 1:10 | / 1:47 |
| DC | | | | | | |
| Formatter | 2 | 9 | 80 | 726,016 | 1:09 | / 2:13 |
| (Extended | | | | | | |
| format) | 2 | 10 | 82 | 828,416 | 1:11 | / 2:17 |
| Synchro | | | | | | |
| Express Format | 2 | 9 | 80 | 726,016 | 1:07 | / n.a. |
| (Extended | 2 | 10 | 82 | 828,416 | 1:09 | / n.a. |
| Formats) | 2 | 11 | 82 | 912,384 | 2:12 | / n.a. |

COPY SPEED COMPARISONS

For testing copy speed I used a disk formatted to 2 sides, 10 sectors, 82 tracks (839,680 bytes) and copied 692,869 bytes of information to the disk. Here are the results:

| Copy Program | Format Destination Disk While Copying | Time Required (min:sec) | |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------|-----------|
| | | Verify Off | Verify On |
| Atari desktop | No | n.a. | / 2:58 |
| FastCopy III | No | 1:11 | / 2:03 |
| | Yes | 1:57 | / 2:19 |
| DeskTop formatter 1.1 | No | 1:21 | / 2:11 |

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------|-------------|
| | Yes | 2:21 / 3:17 |
| Universal Item Selector | No | n.a. / 3:50 |
| DC Formatter | No | 1:57 / 1:57 |
| | Yes | 2:57 / 2:57 |
| ProCopy | No | 1:19 / 1:51 |
| | Yes | 2:15 / 2:10 |
| Cheetah ver 2.0 | No | 2:12 / ---- |
| Synchro Express | No/Yes* | 0:47 / ---- |

* Note: Synchro Express is a hardware chip that plugs into both your printer port and second floppy drive port. This disables your second floppy making it a 'receive data drive' only. It did not matter if the disk in the second drive was formatted or not, it still copied in 47 seconds.

In fairness to Atari it is my understanding that the Atari desktop verifies each track while doing formatting and copying. This means that FastCopy (with the verify option on) is only 31 seconds faster for formatting and 55 seconds faster for copying than the Atari desktop. However, using FastCopy without verify these speed increases jump to: 1 min. 03 sec. for formatting and 1 min. 47 sec. for copying. This seems to not be too risky. I've been using 'no-verify' standard format and copy with FastCopy and DeskTop Formatter and have had no problems.

One thing I found strange was during the writing of my review. I bought a Megafile 30 hard drive and apparently when the the Atari hard disk driver is installed you can get a few more bytes when formatting. Without hard disk driver installed you get 839,680 bytes with FastCopy for a 2 side, 10 sector and 82 track format. With the hard disk driver installed for the same format you get 841,728 bytes and there were similar byte gains with all the formatting programs.

As you can see both FastCopy and DeskTop Formatter are very fast at doing copying and formatting (most of the other programs are fast too, just not as fast). I do not know if I will send \$30.00 to Germany to get the English manual since I am able to use most all the functions of FastCopy. But I will send the \$10.00 to John Harris for DeskTop formatter and RamPlus because these programs are worth it and I want to support American developers. A word of warning when you use the extended formats (11 sectors and higher than 81 tracks) the disk might be incompatible with other drives (especially older drives). I found this out at one of our meetings when I tried a file copy on a disk formatted to 11 sectors and 82 tracks. The club's IB drive didn't understand the format, so I had to reform at my disk. Good thing I had FastCopy along to do it with!

Well there you have it. I hope you have enjoyed reading this article as much as I have in writing it.

Happy Atari computing! 'Till next time....

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